

SOUTHERN REGION FIELD COORDINATORS

TEAM CHARTER

December 2002
Revised June 2003

Mission Statement

The mission of the Southern Region is to enhance the professional growth of correction's practitioners in the Southern Region through the sharing of information, education and training that is pertinent to the goals and objectives of the National Institute of Corrections. These things will be accomplished by:

- Assessing and prioritizing the training needs of the Southern Region
- Collaborating to access and synergize resources of the Regional Field Coordinators (RFC) (current and alumni) and their respective organizations along with those of the National Institute of Corrections
- Planning and delivering training, information and education that meet the most critical needs identified by constituent groups through efforts that reflect "promising practices" within targeted disciplines, and
- Building training capacity among the RFC's and criminal justice professionals in the southern region states

Team Decision-Making Process

The Southern Region Field Coordinators recognize the role of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) as the sponsoring agency for the Regionalization Project. Through our participation, we agree to work within the established framework of that relationship by following associated regulations and guiding principles and by helping to accomplish those goals and objectives of NIC that converge with the needs of our constituents.

Decision Making Authority

Decisions concerning the Southern Region Charter, activities, roles and responsibilities of the project team result from the planning efforts of the project group. However, final approval rests with the National Institute of Corrections.

Factors That Impact Decisions and Participation

Factors that influence the decisions and participation of the RFCs fall into two categories; NIC guidelines and personal or Home Agency commitment.

NIC guidelines include all rules, regulations and underlying philosophies governing the scope, practice and support functions of NIC and its ancillary services, including the Regionalization Project.

Personal or Home Agency commitment includes all time and resource factors that influence the ability of an RFC to remain committed throughout their designated terms of service.

It is essential that all team members are actively involved in decision-making processes. We will seek consensus among all members of the team as we make decisions to insure active support for our programs, activities and other outcomes. This will require the commitment of all RFCs to not only participate in the process but to then actively support the decisions that have been made by the group. When efforts to gain consensus fail to produce agreement, the back-up method will be majority vote.

Charter Review

The Team Charter will be reviewed during the annual and mid-year development process to allow the team to assess its continued viability and to guide the group in its labors. Changes to the charter will be implemented after the mid-year development process.

Southern Region Team Values

Creativity

We endeavor to develop training and training related materials that are original, thought provoking and expressive of our concern for the furtherance of the professionals we serve.

Diversity

We celebrate the differences in others because it is diversity that helps inspire thought, growth, and change. Our intent is to always be mindful of those differences and sculpt our offerings to recognize and involve everyone.

Learning

We understand that learning is a process of gaining knowledge through study or experience. Furthermore, we understand that because there are different learning styles, we must strive to design learning projects and interventions that are appealing to all of our constituents.

Capacity Building

We are concerned with helping others to reach their potential by giving them skills and information that they can build upon to enhance themselves professionally.

Collaboration and Teamwork

We value utilizing every members' gift(s) as tools to hurdle problems and barriers and addressing those problems through delivery of top quality training, information and education.

Team Member Roles and Functions
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The essence of our team is shared commitment. We strive for something greater than our members could achieve individually. Team roles are assigned to ensure the integrity of our planning and decision-making processes. These roles will be rotated periodically to foster individual commitment, development and team synergy. The roles are:

Project Team Facilitator

- Monitors progress toward goals and planning of the project
- Leads the project team in planning and executing steps toward achieving project outcomes
- Leads the team to develop agenda for conference calls for project work
- Facilitates team meetings and conference calls for project work
- Encourages active participation of all team members on the projects

Scribe

- Captures critical elements of meeting discussion for each agenda item on chart paper
- Records decisions on chart paper

Recorder

- Transcribes meeting discussion(s) and processes, including information from charts
- Records decisions, action items (assigned/volunteered), critical dates and deadlines
- Distributes meeting notes via e-mail to RFC team
- Maintains records
- Takes conference call minutes and distributes them electronically within 3 working days

Timekeeper

- Keeps track of agenda and scheduled meeting times
- Conducts “time checks” with team while meetings are in process
- Works with facilitator to keep team discussions on track

RFC Team Member

- Participates in RFC activities (conference calls, meetings, projects, etc)
- Notifies conference call coordinator of inability to participate in conference call
- Completes all assignments within agreed upon time frames

Conference Call Coordinator

- Sends conference call draft agenda and final agenda to all team members via e-mail

Conference Call Facilitator

- Calls roll
- Facilitates RFC team though conference call agenda

Alumni Coordinator

- Works with NIC program specialist to develop agenda for meetings
- Helps locate and provide resources for team projects
- Works with NIC program specialist to promote team building within the Southern Region RFC Team
- Reviews charter with team and assists team in making revisions
- Ensures that new and returning RFC's are part of the charter review/revision process
- Facilitates RFC meetings

Archivist

- Responsible for collecting, storing and preserving the internal written records of the Southern Region Field Coordinators (i.e., meeting agendas, meeting minutes, project tracking notes, and other planning documents) for future RFC teams
- At the end of their tenure, passes accumulated records on to the next Archivist

Team Norms and Ground Rules

In order for the Southern Region RFC's to be effective and accomplish our mission, team norms and ground rules must be established as a guide to our team work. The overriding principle we operate under is mutual respect for all team members. This creates the proper environment for all team members to work together in accomplishing our shared goals.

Specific areas that we concentrate on in our efforts to create a harmonious and productive work team are:

Communication

Open communication between team members is critical to our success. It is essential that we actively listen to one another as opposed to just hearing each other. Basic rules of common courtesy should be maintained such as respecting the opinions of others and allowing others to speak freely (one person talking at a time). All team members must be committed to actively participating in our work processes.

Operations

Flexibility in our operations is the key to our success. In the fluid environment in which we work, we must have the ability to adapt to changing conditions and circumstances. As team members, we must also continuously seek innovative solutions to problems we face in addition to continuously seeking better ways to work together.

Conflict Management

In every group, there will be conflicts as this is a normal aspect of group behavior. Conflict is not necessarily a bad thing as it spurs creativity in our decision-making. The key to making conflict productive is the willingness and commitment of all RFCs to clarify the reasons for their opinions and positions and, most importantly, for everyone to focus on ideas and strategies, not personalities.

Individual Behavior

To reduce the possibility of negative conflict between members of the Southern Region team, we must remember how our individual behavior influences the group. To that end, it is important that we support the group by following through on our commitments. We must actively participate in all functions and start all meetings (to include conference calls) on time. The key is to actively support each other and have fun while doing so.

Southern Region RFC Team Transition Process

The Southern Region Field Coordinators Team is dynamic. Changes to the team occur when:

- RFC's complete their 3-year term
- New RFC's are selected annually to join the team
- An RFC takes another professional position that prevents continued participation
- An RFC must bow out due to organizational/personal commitments

We recognize that each time a team member is added or leaves, we have a new team.

In order to facilitate the transition and remain focused on our mission we agree to:

- Ensure active participation by current RFC's
- Ensure that new members are involved and actively participate
- Ensure that Veteran RFC's are utilized as much as possible on future projects

Transition of New and Departing RFC Team Members

Recruitment of New Members

Recruitment of new members shall occur through a nomination and selection process on an annual basis. The NIC Staff Coordinator assigned to the Southern Region shall oversee this process. Nominees are referred to the NIC Staff Coordinator for review as a potential new member to voluntarily serve a term (up to three years) as endorsed by their agency's chief executive officer.

Approval and Orientation Processes

Once a candidate is selected and approved by NIC as a new RFC Team Member, orientation processes begin.

The process begins with a telephone call from the NIC Staff Coordinator to advise the nominee that he/she has been accepted as a RFC.

New RFCs will be provided an orientation packet that will include the following:

- A letter of congratulations on their selection from NIC, accompanied by an outline of RFC expectations
- A brief historical overview explaining the concept and purpose of the Regionalization Project
- A copy of the Southern Region Team Charter which details the roles and responsibilities of an RFC in the Southern Region
- A list of frequently asked questions/answers
- A list of expectations and benefits of serving as a RFC. This list will be beneficial to the nominee in making his/her decision for accepting or declining NIC's invitation.

- A list of past, current, and proposed projects, if available
- A roster of the names and contact information of other RFC's within the region

The NIC Staff Coordinator shall have the responsibility for follow-up with the selectee to ensure receipt of the packet, to address any questions the selectee may have, and to welcome them to the RFC Team upon acceptance of NIC's invitation.

Transition of Departing RFCs

Recognition at completion of term can be made in various forms. The Southern Region Team shall award the departing RFC with one or more of the following: a certificate of appreciation, card, journal or other token from the Southern Region. These tokens of appreciation and esteem will be at the RFC Team's expense.

Veteran RFCs Participation in Regionalization

After completion of the three-year term, continued service is encouraged for those alumni RFCs that desire to play a continuing vital role in the Southern Region Team. These alumni RFCs are known as Veteran RFCs.

Tasks of Veteran RFCs may include, but are not limited to the following:

- To review, use or pilot materials produced by the Southern Region such as handbooks, toolboxes, checklists, manuals, etc., and provide the current Southern Region Team with feedback to enhance their product
- To serve as an outside advisor for the Southern Region by providing research on training suggestions to solicit new ideas for new initiatives
- To act as a scout for recruitment of new RFCs from their own state or other states within the region
- To return to mid-year meetings (at their own expense) to assist with planning and development of new initiatives. Veteran RFCs can assist the current RFC Team by participating in brainstorming, problem solving and planning sessions featuring new, current and ongoing initiatives.